

CLAIMS:

1. In a patent application manager system maintaining a database of references, a method comprising:

entering reference data in a database for a first patent application;

copying the reference data to a database for a second patent application, where the second patent application is related to the first patent application;

automatically creating a docket entry in a docketing database using the application manager system, wherein the docket entry indicates that references have been entered for the second patent application and a may need to be cited to a patent office; and

generating a viewable docket including the docket entry.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprises automatically creating an information disclosure statement including the reference data.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the viewable docket is a hard copy.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the viewable docket is electronic and viewable on a screen.

5. A patent management system comprising:

a docket database to maintain due dates for patent application tasks;

a reference database to maintain reference data for patent applications; and

an application manager to copy reference data from a first patent application to a second related application, the application manager automatically generates a docket entry in the docket database for the second application.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprises automatically creating an information disclosure statement including the reference data.

7. A machine readable medium comprising:

machine readable code to instruct a processor to copy reference data for a first patent application to a database for a second patent application, where the second patent application is related to the first patent application;

machine readable code to instruct a processor to automatically create a docket entry in a docketing database using the application manager system, wherein the docket entry indicates that references have been entered for the second patent application and a may need to be cited to a patent office.

8. The machine readable medium of claim 7 further comprising machine readable code to instruct a processor to generate a viewable docket including the docket entry.